

(d) the area leased out for mining of granite and graphite during the last three years. State-wise; and

(e) the share of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in leasing out the mines during the above said period. State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Mining leases are granted as per provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and Mineral Concession Rules, 1960.

(b) As per Section 9 of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 the holder of a mining lease is required to pay royalty in respect of any mineral removed or consumed, at the rate as specified in the Second Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957.

(c) to (e). The information is being collected from the various State Governments/UTs and will be placed on the Table of the House

[English]

Distribution of Basmati Rice and Wheat

1747. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state .

(a) whether there is any proposal to distribute basmati rice and better quality deshi wheat through the public distribution system to card holders.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b). No, Sir.

(c) The type and variety of foodgrains supplied depend on its procurement, availability and affordability by the common man

[Translation]

Air India Turnover

1748. SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the turnover of Air-India during the last three years;

(b) whether Indian Airlines and International Airport Authority of India are constantly making profits whereas Air-India has been incurring loss; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) The total revenue of Air-India during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 is Rs. 2767.96 Cr., Rs. 3130.26 Cr. and Rs. 3542.29 (Prov.) Cr respectively.

(b) and (c). Profit/Loss of Air-India, Indian Airlines and International Airports Authority of India (IAAI) during the period 1993-96 is given below :

Name of the PSU	(Rs. in crores)		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Air India	201.90 (Profit)	40.80 (Profit)	244.00 (Loss)
Indian Airlines	258.46 (Loss)	188.73 (Loss)	134.25 (Loss)
IAAI	50.22	97.70	Merged with NAA from 1.4.95

The reasons for the losses of Indian Airlines are grounding of A-320 fleet, fluctuations in foreign exchange rates, decline in market share, agitation by pilots and increase in landing and other airport charges.

The reasons for the losses of Air-India are increase in landing charges, increased competition, weakening of the rupee and expenditure on acquisition of additional aircraft capacity.

Both Air-India and Indian Airlines are taking steps to improve their product, image and on-time performance to attract more passengers and to increase revenue.

Air India Routes

1749. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state .

(a) whether routes of Air India are economically viable.

(b) if not, the reasons therefor, and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to make them economically viable?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. However, on a number of routes operated, Air India incurred operating loss during 1995-96 owing to increase in expenditure on landing, handling and navigational charges, reduction in yields and increase in fixed costs.

(c) Air India is taking steps to intensify its marketing efforts, augment capacity, reduce non-operating costs and to improve its product, image and on time performance.

Promotion of Tourism in Uttar Pradesh

1750. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR :
DR. BALIRAM :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Union Government to promote tourism in Uttar Pradesh.

(b) the names of the places in Uttar Pradesh where Government have decided to construct tourist spots during the last two years, and

(c) the progress made in this regard, so far?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) to (c). Promotion of tourism and implementation of tourism projects are primarily the responsibility of the State/Union Territory Governments. However, the Department of Tourism Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State/Union Territory Governments on the basis of specific project proposals received, based on their merits, inter so priority and availability of funds.

The Department of Tourism, Government of India, has provided financial assistance for the following ten projects which are in different stages of implementation by the State Government : 1. Meditation Centre at Sarnath. 2. Visitor's Centre at Sarnath. 3. Development around Chaukhandi Stupa. 4. Floodlighting of Varanasi Ghats. 5. Restaurant-cum-waiting hall, Sravasti. 6. Restaurant-cum-waiting hall, Kushinagar. 7. Restaurant-cum-waiting hall, Pallia. 8. Floodlighting of Council House at Lucknow. 9. Yatri Niwas at Chitrakot. 10. Sound and Light at Agra Fort.

[English]

Setting up of Telecom Authority of India

1751 SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY
SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT
SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Union Government have cleared the Telecom Authority of India Bill

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith functions and composition thereof;

(c) the time by which the Bill is likely to be introduced;

(d) whether the Punjab, Haryana, Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry requested to review the said Bill; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (e). The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Bill, 1996 has been introduced on 23.7.96 in the current Session of Parliament. No such representation has come to notice.

Mining Lease

1752. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether some private sector multinational companies have been granted mining lease in different States;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the norms fixed therefor; and

(c) the period for which the mines have been leased out?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (c). Mining Leases are granted as per the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and Mineral Concession Rules, 1960. As per provisions of the Act Mining leases can be given only to Indian Nationals or to a Company as defined under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Companies Act, 1956. Section 8 of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 requires that the minimum period for which a mining lease may be granted should not be less than 20 years while the maximum period of the lease should not exceed 30 years.

Special PDS Cards

1753 SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to target 62.4 million families living below the poverty line for a special ration card scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the approximate cost likely to be involved in implementing the above scheme; and